

RED RIDING HOOD THROUGH THE YEARS

by

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Senior Honors Thesis

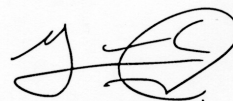
Appalachian State University

Submitted to the Department of English
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

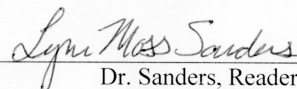
Bachelor of Arts

May 2019

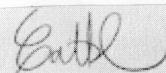
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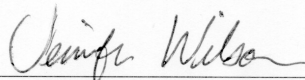
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RED RIDING HOOD THROUGH THE YEARS

In 1697, Red Riding Hood entered the written literary tradition, building off the ideas introduced in oral versions of the tale, and it is still being readapted over three hundred years later. Yet while the story has changed over the centuries, at the same time the story of Little Red Riding Hood has experienced few changes throughout its adaptation history. This tale presents the story of a young girl who visits her grandmother but meets a wolf who proceeds to eat both the grandmother and the girl before someone comes to save them. Common elements of this story as currently told include the red hood, the young girl, the grandmother, the wolf, the huntsman, and a happy ending for the human characters. Yet these elements have not always existed in the original tale. Once only told orally, this tale had clear distinctions depending on where the story was being told and who was telling the story, and this trend continued even after the story was first recorded in print. To observe these distinctions closely, this paper is broken into sections that will look at earlier adaptations of the tale, both oral and literary, as well as modern adaptations before looking at the pedagogical implications of using Red Riding Hood with children. Similar to many fairy tales, there is something to be learned from Red Riding Hood's story, and how these lessons can be used with children is important to consider, especially after one learns about the earlier literary versions of the tale. As each author changes parts of the story slightly, the tale nonetheless remains recognizable, pointing out the enduring nature of this tale, especially in terms of its lessons. In this paper, I will analyze the variations, as well as the lack thereof, in both early and modern adaptations of Red Riding Hood before dissecting the pedagogical implications of this tale.

1. Fairy Tale Tradition

The beginning of the fairy tale tradition is difficult to pinpoint because the fairy tale “emanated from a wide variety of tiny tales thousands of years ago that were widespread throughout the world and continue to exist in unique ways under different environmental conditions” (Zipes 21). Beginning as an oral tradition, fairy tales have since been written down, published, and transmitted throughout the world with different adaptations. Despite the changes in the transmission of these tales, certain elements have not changed, such as the length of fairy tales, which are known for being relatively short, sometimes no more than a single page (Warner 8). A more important element, however, is the idea that fairy tales operate on a level of familiarity. This familiarity can be a result of the story being passed down from generation to generation or due to its similarity to other tales and myths. Even as time passes, these stories do not undergo many changes, and readers can still recognize what they believe to be the original tale regardless of any variations.

Yet there still are changes in these tales, despite their universality and the stasis that fairy tales tend to experience in order to continue to be recognized centuries later. Each author instills a part of themselves into their own adaptation, drawing on personal childhood experience and a supposed empathy with children (Lathey 7). While there are some fairy tales that explore dark and adult themes, many authors tend to direct their stories toward a younger audience. Nonetheless, anything and everything can influence how an adaptation of a fairy tale is written. While these changes often do not alter the overall structure of the plot, they can be found in the details and the characters. But the story still does not change much in general, and the source tale is still recognizable. Nonetheless, the differences that do occur give readers a glimpse into the author’s life and times while the tale itself maintains a level of familiarity.

2.1 Origins of the Red Riding Hood Oral Tradition

The story of Little Red Riding Hood, like many other fairy tales, stems from oral folklore traditions, although the exact roots of this story are not easily identified due to the variation that has occurred throughout different countries. Yet in 1885, Paul Delarue, a folklorist in France, recorded a folk narrative called “The Story of Grandmother,” almost two centuries after what is believed to be the beginning of the literary tradition (Tatar *Classic Fairy Tales* 3). While the beginning of the literary will be explored in the next section of this paper, it is important first to understand where the written story came from in terms of the oral tradition. Several elements of Delarue’s story lead experts like Maria Tatar to believe that this version, despite its publication date, is the most similar to the oral tradition. In this tale, Red Riding Hood escapes the wolf in her grandmother’s bed, after unknowingly drinking wine that is actually her grandmother’s blood and eating meat that is actually her grandmother’s flesh, by asking the wolf if she can go outside to relieve herself. Tatar argues the following:

Delarue’s narrative is more faithful to the oral tradition . . . in part because the folklorist recording it was not interested in producing a highly literary book of manners for aristocratic children and worked hard to capture the exact wording of the peasant raconteur, and in part because literary traditions are notoriously conservative and often preserve the flavor of narratives as they circulated centuries ago. (*Classic Fairy Tales* 4)

Despite this, there is no concrete evidence to support what exactly the oral roots of the Red Riding Hood tradition originally was, even though the idea of an oral tradition is that it is subject to variation based on who is telling the story and how it has been transmitted. But based on Delarue’s attempts to stay true to the folklore and the not so conservative nature of the blood and flesh scene, which would have scandalized readers at the time, researchers such as Tatar, Jacques

Barchilon, and Peter Flinders tend to claim this version as the most similar to the oral tradition, in spite of its publication date after other adaptations began to be recorded.

Even though it is believed that Delarue remained the most faithful to the oral tradition toward the end of the nineteenth century, some of the elements found in the tale precede even the oral tradition. Researcher Bruno Bettelheim reminds people of the Greek myth of the Titan Cronos, who swallowed his children in order to prevent a prophecy from coming true (168). When his youngest son is born, however, his wife replaces the baby with a stone wrapped in swaddling clothes, and Cronos swallows the rock, believing it to be his son. One group of authors, known as the Brothers Grimm who will be later analyzed in this paper, incorporates this idea of rocks in the stomach in their later adaptation. Also from this Greek myth comes the idea of children in the stomach coming out unharmed, wherein the first children swallowed are rescued from the stomach and come out alive just like Red Riding Hood and her grandmother in several versions of the tale.

Another source that likely influenced this tale is found in the Latin collection of poems, *Fecunda Ratis*, written in 1023 by Egbert of Liège. In this tale, one finds “some basic elements of Little Red Riding Hood: a little girl with a red cap, the company of wolves, a child being swallowed alive who returns unharmed, and a stone put in place of the child” (Bettelheim 168). In Egbert’s poem, titled “About a Girl Saved from Wolf Cubs,” a five-old girl wearing a tunic of red wool is attacked by a wolf who tries to feed the girl to wolf cubs. However, the wolf cubs are unable to harm the girl, which she claims is because of the red tunic, and the poem ends (Ziolkowski 103). During the preface, Egbert claimed to have used popular traditions told to him by peasants, although it is hard to know if he made any modifications as researchers are unable to trace the oral origins that far back. As far as experts know, he was as faithful enough for the story to be recognizable amongst his audience, keeping the main elements of the story intact

(Ziolkowski 104). Researchers Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, quoted in Ziolkowski, have brought claims of disputation as to “whether Egbert of Liège transmits an early form of the Little Red Riding Hood fairy tale”, but clearly there are some common elements between the two tales (104). While this is not similar to the plot of later adaptations, it is clear that the tale of Red Riding Hood has an ancient history based on mythology and earlier tales, all of which influenced the oral tradition as well as the literary tradition.

2.2 Charles Perrault and *Little Red Riding Hood*

While the origins of the oral tradition are difficult to trace, Barchilon and Flinders, experts on the fairy tale author Charles Perrault, note that they are unable to find a literary version of Red Riding Hood that came into existence before Perrault (93). As Perrault’s work is the earliest recorded version of Red Riding Hood that researchers are aware of, he is the first author whose story will be analyzed in closer detail. Published in 1697, Perrault’s French adaptation of *Little Red Riding Hood* is still one of the most popular renditions of the story along with that of the Brothers Grimm. Here, Red Riding Hood meets the wolf along the way to her grandmother’s house and tells him where she is going. Hungry, the wolf races the young girl to her grandmother’s house and proceeds to eat the unsuspecting grandmother. When Red Riding Hood arrives, he disguises himself as the grandmother and invites Red Riding Hood to join him in bed where she enters into a conversation with the wolf. Red Riding Hood undresses before getting in bed with the wolf and comments on how long and furry the wolf’s legs are, as well as what big eyes and teeth the wolf has. Barchilon and Flinders claim that “everyone knows the dialogue between Little Red Riding Hood and the wolf . . . however, it is little known that this celebrated dialogue was first printed in Perrault’s collection and may well be his own invention, an invention that has become a tradition” (99, 100). Unaware of his lasting influence, Perrault

included these formulaic questions, and some researchers, such as Barchilon and Flinders, believe that this is to alleviate the horror that follows, as a marginal note on the original text says that this dialogue should be interpreted “as a playful, humorous aside” (Barchilon and Flinders 100). After this exchange, the wolf eats the girl, and the story ends with no chance of survival for the titular character. The story then concludes with a section marked as the moral of the story, where Perrault talks about the dangers of trusting “wolves,” especially those who seem the most sincere and charming.

Unique to Perrault’s story is his moral, as it is the only adaptation that includes such a literary device set apart by the change in writing style from prose to poetry. In fact, many translations of Perrault’s work from French into English ignore the moral, with translators choosing to stop the story after Red Riding Hood is eaten as that is when the story itself ends. But the moral acts as Perrault’s way to speak directly to his audience and “[indicate] the allegorical nature of his story [which is that] it is a tale symbolically recounting the seduction of a young child or woman” (Barchilon and Flinders 71). Below, an English translation of the moral is included before an analysis of what actually Barchilon and Flinders refer to when mentioning the allegorical nature of Red Riding Hood:

Young children, as this tale will show,
 And mainly pretty girls with charm,
 Do wrong and often come to harm
 In letting those they do not know
 Stay talking to them when they meet.
 And if they don’t do as they ought,
 It’s no surprise that some are caught
 By wolves who take them off to eat.

I call them wolves, but you will find
 That some are not the savage kind,
 Not howling, ravening or raging;
 Their manners seem, instead, engaging,
 They're softly-spoken and discreet.
 Young ladies whom they talk to on the street
 They follow to their homes and through the hall,
 And upstairs to their rooms; when they're there
 They're not as friendly as they might appear:
 These are the most dangerous wolves of all. (Perrault 103)

Starting off by indicating that his audience includes children and women, Perrault immediately announces that when people talk to strangers there may be dangerous consequences. This sentiment is reminiscent of the modern day expression of “stranger danger” that children are taught, in that these lines too are warning of the dangers of talking to strangers, although the harm that may occur is unspecified. Furthermore, these lines have a sinister tone to them, in that they come across as a threat primarily to young girls. By this point, it has become evident that, beyond a shift from prose to poetry, another shift has occurred, this time between fiction and non-fiction. Separating the moral from the tale itself may serve as a way to emphasize the differences between these two sections and to help readers understand that one is a story to be enjoyed and that the other is a warning to be taken seriously, despite the moral being framed in a story intended for children.

In lines 6-8, Perrault clarifies on who is harming the young girls and shows the connection between the moral and the tale with the idea of the wolf being the predator in both

cases. This is where the allegorical nature of the tale becomes more evident, in that the wolves are not actually wolves but instead are humans, in particular men. Here, the wolves harm the children and women who stop to talk to them, but since this section of the story is not fiction the wolves would not be able to talk to them, but a human with the predatory characteristics typically assigned to wolves would be able to both talk and harm anyone. Showing the connection between the fiction and the real life in these lines, Perrault points out the universal applicability of this situation. Any young child who talks to strangers may have a similar experience to that of Red Riding Hood, for anyone, not just Red Riding Hood, can disobey their mother, talk to a stranger, and come to harm. Anyone and everyone is at risk from these “wolves.”

Continuing on with the second stanza, Perrault emphasizes the allegory of his tale, with the idea of wolves actually being men, and introduces the sexual nature of the tale. Having hinted at a possible sexual encounter between Red Riding Hood and the wolf with her getting into bed naked with the wolf, Perrault concludes with the idea of what happens behind closed doors between young ladies and men, which is reminiscent of sexual assault situations in that this is what can happen in the bedroom when no one is around. While what is described is not always the case, Perrault hints at what would be the negative and extreme side of sexual encounters, the undesired encounters that are harder to prevent. He also adds that it is the people who seem the nicest at first who others should be most aware of as they can be the most dangerous simply because they are the least suspecting. There is no way for others to know what goes on behind these closed doors, and there is no way to stop it either. At this point, the situation is out of the woman’s control, yet in a sense it is all her fault for talking to that seemingly kind stranger on the street.

While this moral seemingly acts as a warning to young woman, it also places the responsibility and blame on the young woman at the same time. Only the woman can prevent this sort of situation by not talking to strangers, and nowhere in the moral does Perrault place the blame on the men by stating something along the lines of this is their fault. Even though the men are the predators attacking the harmless women, the moral serves as a warning that reinforces the idea that a woman should know better than to talk to strangers, lest something like this occur. In comparison to the oral tradition, where the young girl is “forthright, brave, and shrewd,” in Perrault’s narrative the main character is precarious and unable to stay out of the wolf’s way as a result of the choices that she makes (Zipes 26). Here, Perrault transforms the character of Red Riding Hood throughout the story from a “naïve, attractive girl, who is induced to neglect Mother’s warnings and enjoy herself in what she consciously believes to be innocent ways, into nothing but a fallen woman” (Bettelheim 169). The use of the word “fallen” can have multiple interpretations, such as denoting elements of sexual assault and referring to Red Riding Hood’s death. It even has biblical implications, comparing Red Riding Hood’s fall from innocence to Lucifer’s fall from Heaven. Nonetheless, this quote showcases the changes in the character of Red Riding Hood that occur as a result of her poor choices. The wolf plays no part in the fall of Red Riding Hood because it is supposedly up to her to make better choices and avoid this sort of situation. In Bettelheim’s analysis of Perrault’s work, he states that “it seems that many adults think it better to scare children into good behavior than to relieve their anxieties as a true fairy tale does” (167). Blaming women for falling for the wolf’s tricks serves as a reminder that bad behavior in women, such as Red Riding Hood disobeying her mother, can have scary, and even possibly deadly, consequences. But if one follows the rules, they will be able to avoid these outcomes. Perrault’s moral reads along the lines of victim blaming, which, even though this tale was published over three hundred years, is still resonant in today’s society. This just further

emphasizes how relevant Perrault was during his lifetime and is still today within the context of modern debates about victim blaming and culpability.

As already mentioned, Red Riding Hood undresses and gets in bed with the wolf, an element of the story almost never told amongst young children today. It brings a number of questions to the center, such as why would Red Riding Hood undress? The wolf does not tell her to do so; he simply tells her to get in bed. The decision to undress is entirely the girl's own choice and emphasizes her precariousness. Throughout the tale, her youth is mentioned many times, as if to serve as a reminder that the girl is young and does not know any better.

Nonetheless, although she does not realize it at the time, she is literally getting into bed with a wolf. However, that same statement has the figurative implications of sexual assault, like the idea that the moral mentions. Furthermore, Red Riding Hood then exclaims "what long legs you have" to her grandmother (101). At this point, she is under a blanket with the wolf, and for her to notice the wolf's legs specifically means that she looked under the blanket. This line, although it fits into Perrault's famous pattern now reiterated in most adaptations, has sexual implications as there is no reason for Red Riding Hood to look under the blanket at her grandmother's legs.

One further area to explore in this adaptation is the ending of the story where both Red Riding Hood and her grandmother die, something that is changed in later versions. No one comes to save them, and the wolf alone is triumphant and satisfied. Considering the allegory of the fairy tale, the men are the victorious ones in this story. One possible explanation for the success of males is that this tale is describing and supporting males in power through the wolf's victory. Considering the social dynamics between men and women in seventeenth century France, Perrault could be reflecting the time period and his opinions on the role of men in society. After all, his book of fairy tales was published in the middle of the Bourbons' rule, a predominantly male dynasty. Only men held positions of power, with women remaining home to

take care of the house. As a result, women who went against these norms were disliked in society throughout this time period. If not involved in religion or politics because of their more powerful husband, women were expected to be housemakers, although this did begin to change as the Enlightenment continued past Perrault's time (Davis 84). More specifically, however, during Perrault's time, Louis XIV sat on the throne, described as "a king born, completely sure of himself, and reveling in his job" (Sédillot 201). As the monarch, Louis XIV left an impact on France, especially in relation to its religion at the time, but did little to further a women's role. Yet, Louis XIV and other men in power, like the minister of the state Jean-Baptiste Colbert, were interested in listening to fairy tales, even after their childhood ended. The teacher of the royal heir, François Fénelon, "thought of fairy tales in terms of their enjoyment and educational value" and arranged meetings with Perrault to discuss his fairy tales so as to best use them when teaching the monarchs (Barchilon and Flinders 79). Furthermore, Perrault's works were intended solely for adults in the aristocracy, like the king, despite the moral that seems to be aimed at children (79). The king's high regard for fairy tales, along with other views of folklore during the seventeenth century, influenced what literature Perrault produced.

According to Ruth Michaelis-Jena, this tale was written at the beginning Enlightenment period in France, a time that "considered folktales silly, even dangerous superstition, fit perhaps for old wives and the nursery," and folktales such as *Little Red Riding Hood* were "published [to provide] moral teaching, often mixed with satire" (3). As a result, allegorical tales increased in popularity as there was a lesson to be learned within each story. The popularity of Perrault's tales within the royal court along with the Enlightenment's attitudes toward folktales helped to influence what Perrault wrote. Although *Little Red Riding Hood* tends to be considered one of his darkest tales, along with *Blue Beard*, it has a clear moral to illustrate the dangers of talking to strangers and introduces the "what big eyes you have" dialogue as a satirical, lighthearted

passage, fitting into Michaelis-Jena's claims of the role of folklore during the Enlightenment (Barchilon and Flinders 64).

2.3 The Brothers Grimm and *Little Red Cap*

Around 150 years after Perrault's work was published, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm published a collection of fairy tales that includes a story called *Little Red Cap*. By this time, "most of the tales of Perrault appeared in German . . . [having] crossed the Rhine through the first German translation of 1745, and through other oral channels" and influenced other authors who would add on to and amend Perrault's tale (Barchilon and Flinders 64). Collecting several other stories that are still told today, the Brothers Grimm created their own adaptation of the story of Red Riding Hood, adding their own touches to the story. The Brothers Grimm wanted to collect local tales, legends, and traditions in particular to show "the importance of oral tradition for the history of literature as a ,whole" and having first heard the tale of Red Riding Hood from their friends, who were excellent storytellers, they transcribed the story to include in their collection (Michaelis-Jena 51). Perrault's influence at this point was still everywhere, with the Grimms having to omit some of the tales in their collection "as they were too close to Perrault's stories" (Michaelis-Jena 48). Although they did not "transcribe faithfully what they collected, but improved the style of folk informants", the Brothers Grimm are still often "revered as the father of folklore", even though they were not the original creators of their stories or even the first to publish the tales (Barchilon and Flinders 115).

Much of their tale is similar to that of Perrault's at first with Red Riding Hood meeting the wolf as she travels to her grandmother's house. The wolf suggests that she pick flowers for her grandmother so that he can beat her to her final destination, just like in Perrault's tale. However, the story finally changes when Red Riding Hood arrives at her grandmother's house.

She does not undress before getting into bed with the wolf and simply remarks on the “grandmother’s” big eyes and teeth. After the wolf eats the young girl, a new character is introduced who alters the structure of the story and the adaptations that follow. A huntsman walking by the grandmother’s house decides to check on the elderly woman to make sure she is okay and instead discovers the wolf. He manages to save everyone, and Red Riding Hood comes up with the idea of filling the wolf’s stomach with rocks, which ultimately kills the wolf.

The 1812 version of *Little Red Cap* ends here, but in 1857 the Brothers Grimm rereleased this story after adding another part to the story to illustrate that Red Riding Hood has learned her lesson about talking to strangers. After the wolf is killed and time has passed, Red Riding Hood is once again on her way to grandmother’s house when she runs into another wolf. Instead of talking to him or telling him where she is going, she races to her grandmother’s house, where the two women refuse to open the door when the wolf arrives. While the wolf waits on the roof for Red Riding Hood to return home so he can eat her, the grandmother tells the young girl to fill the trough in front of the house with the water that she used to cook sausages. Smelling the sausages, the wolf falls off the roof and drowns in the trough. Once more, Red Riding Hood and her grandmother survive, only this time without anyone’s help.

Literary scholars refer to the Brothers Grimm adaptation of Red Riding Hood as a cleaned up version of the tale, especially when compared to Perrault, and it hardly seems surprising that this story is still one of the most popular adaptations (Levorato 112). There are no instances of sexual assault in this story, and there is no ominous moral serving as a warning to children and women. However, this was not always the case. In *The Annotated Brothers Grimm*, Maria Tatar discusses an early draft for the tale of Red Riding Hood where the girl tries to appease the wolf by offering him her shirt, her boots, and a crown. When the wolf does not accept her offers, she climbs up a tree to escape, but the wolf knocks the tree down by digging at

its roots. Red Riding Hood screams and “her cries for help bring her beloved to the rescue, but—too late—for all he finds is a bloody arm” (Annotated Brothers Grimm 147). Clearly, the Brothers Grimm decided against publishing this story and wrote the story described earlier. Eliminating the bloody arm and the almost striptease with Red Riding Hood offering the wolf her shirt removes both the grotesque and the sexual. Instead, like Perrault changing the non-conservative elements of the oral tradition, the Brothers Grimm “rescripted the events to produce a cautionary tale that accommodates a variety of messages about . . . idleness” (147).

One of the clear distinctions between the Brothers Grimm and Perrault’s adaptation is that Red Riding Hood and her grandmother survive, due to the introduction of the huntsman. Here is an instance of a man saving a woman, where the man acts as a male savior of sorts. On top of saving the day, he even fulfills masculine duties as a hunter, a traditionally male oriented profession. Even though the Brothers Grimm are less obvious with the allegorical nature of this tale than Perrault is, the wolves can still be considered representative of men. Whereas in Perrault’s story there is only one male character, the wolf, now there are two male characters, each representing the two extreme sides of humankind: the good and the bad. Tatar points out that, while “the wolf is usually positioned as male seducer, out to stalk innocent young girls,” the huntsman often represents “patriarchal protection for the two women who are unable to fend for themselves” (Annotated Brothers Grimm 152). These two characters operate as foils for the other and help readers to see that men are not always bad. In this story, the man aligned with goodness through doing the right thing and helping the helpless women prevails, unlike in Perrault’s tale where there is only the bad man and nobody to stop him.

Another view of the huntsman is to think of the role that he plays in the story as a male. Other than saving the women, he “can be viewed as an unconscious representation of the father” (Bettelheim 204). After all, Red Riding Hood shows the matriarchal lines of family with no

mention of a father figure. The only males in the story are the wolf and the huntsman, who as mentioned above represent complete opposites. While the wolf is the seducer, the huntsman fulfills the role of the father archetype, saving his daughter. He can be considered as “the responsible, strong, and rescuing father figure” because of his selfless actions (Bettelheim 172). Without a father figure, Red Riding Hood’s only role models are the females in her family, but even her grandmother is not a strong figure for her to admire. As soon as the narrative opens up, the narrator states that “there was nothing [the grandmother] would not have given the child” (Brothers Grimm 101). Spoiling her granddaughter and giving her whatever she wants, the grandmother loves Red Riding Hood too much, which may lead the girl into trouble. Bettelheim points out that “it would not [be] the first or last time that a child so spoiled by a grandmother runs into trouble in real life,” such as Red Riding Hood telling the wolf where she is going (Bettelheim 173). But by introducing the huntsman, the Brothers Grimm created a strong role model for Red Riding Hood, one who is there to protect and save her, while also creating an admirable character for boys and girls.

Regardless of the huntsman’s role in the story, Red Riding Hood is still a precarious young girl who finds herself in harm’s way. Even though it is believed that the girl was once able to save herself in the oral tradition preceding Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, two of the most popular versions of Red Riding Hood, separated by over 100 years between publications, the character of Red Riding Hood has not changed while others parts of the story have. If anything, the Brothers Grimm make the women more helpless through their reliance on the huntsman to save them whereas before there was no need for anyone to help them as it was already too late. They are unable to do anything and need someone – a man – to help them out of this situation. After all, the man saves the day here. This stasis in the titular character seems to emphasize the idea that men will always prove successful in the end. Furthermore, this stasis shows that there is

something important in the fact that Red Riding Hood is eaten. As already described, Red Riding Hood most likely survived in the oral tradition of the tale, but now she is eaten in several adaptations, including the most popular versions, showcasing that this is now an important element in the tale. If Red Riding Hood had not been eaten the first time around in the Brothers Grimm's story, the tale itself would not have changed much in total. The huntsman could have easily still visited the grandmother, discovered a wolf in her place, and saved the grandmother while Red Riding Hood lived. Overall, the only difference would be that the huntsman showed up earlier, before the wolf could eat the girl. But still Red Riding Hood becomes the wolf's victim, even though it is not necessary for the tale to relay the same story. From Red Riding Hood's death in both versions, readers can see how easily men can overpower women, and in the Brothers Grimm they see the idea that women need a man to save them because they are incapable of making smart decisions on their own.

At the same time, one must consider Red Riding Hood's second chance to prove herself. Whereas she once fell for the wolf's tricks, here she has learned from her mistakes and does not tell the wolf where she is going. There is no huntsman to save the day, simply a young girl and her grandmother outsmarting the wolf. This changes how readers think of Red Riding Hood as, even though she was eaten by the wolf originally as a result of her own poor choices, she now has seemingly matured. She is now the savior without a male's assistance; she and her grandmother are able to defeat this new wolf. This scene reveals what happens when a young girl traveling all by herself does not talk to strangers and give them important information. After all, her chances of survival increase drastically simply by not speaking to the wolf this time around. This scene can operate as a glimpse of hope for girls who make the correct choices. After being scared into proper behavior, Red Riding Hood has the chance to prove just how obeying to her mother affects her chances of survival. By taking Perrault's idea of scaring girls out of making

poor choices, the Brothers Grimm juxtapose Red Riding Hood's near death experience with her survival story to highlight how one's future can change with one simple decision.

This is the first written adaptation to incorporate the idea of rocks in the wolf's stomach, an idea that may stem from Greek mythology as earlier described. But before the rocks can be added, the wolf's stomach is cut up when the huntsman decides not to shoot him in case the grandmother is still alive in the wolf's stomach. Researchers like Bruno Bettelheim and Sigmund Freud have described this scene "as an allusion to the birth process, with the wolf subjected to an operation that ends in his death" (Tatar Annotated Brothers Grimm 154). The wolf essentially experiences a caesarian section with the people in his stomach being reborn, more or less. The stones in the stomach, on one hand, act as retaliation for eating humans but have also "been read as a sign of sterility" (Tatar Annotated Brothers Grimm 154). If one considers this analysis, it becomes clear that the Brothers Grimm adaptation is trying to make a statement on gender roles. While females experience C-sections and males experience sterility, the wolf here experiences both, making it possible that the wolf is experiencing pregnancy envy. At the same time, the idea of pregnancy through the C-section has its own unconscious sexual connotations, possibly leading children to wonder how a child gets into the mother's stomach. Yet, not everyone agrees with this analysis and instead have noticed that this idea of rocks in the stomach has direct parallels with another story from the Brothers Grimm's collection, *The Wolf and the Seven Kids*. "Once more, the wolf is the story's antagonist and eats all but one of the mother goat's kids. The mother finds the wolf and, believing that her children are still alive in his stomach, cuts the wolf's belly using scissors, a needles, and thread. After the children emerge unharmed, like Red Riding Hood and her grandmother, they all work together to fill the wolf's stomach with rocks, which leads to the wolf drowning in a well when he loses his balance.

While the rocks are the obvious connection between this story and Red Riding Hood, there is also the similarity of the wolf drowning in the end. Only in the Brothers Grimm 1857 of Red Riding Hood does the wolf die by drowning in the story's continuation. This is simply a further connection between their already written story, begging the question of why write an alternate ending. Comparing both of the Brothers Grimm's endings to that of Charles Perrault, Zohar Shavit points out that the Brothers Grimm reflected their culture's ideas of education. These views state that a "child must derive a moral lesson from every event, experience, or story to which he is exposed" and that "punishment was itself perceived as an integral part of the educational process" (148). Being eaten by the wolf is Red Riding Hood's punishment that results in her learning, but the alternative ending "furnishes proof that the lesson has indeed been learned" (151).

3.1 Aletta Mazlin and *Caperucita roja*

Perrault and the Brothers Grimm both wrote their adaptations centuries ago in France and Germany, respectively, but the final version to be analyzed here is a recent Spanish adaptation from the female author Aletta Mazlin¹. Mazlin's *Caperucita roja*, written and published online in 2015, for the most part operates as a near translation of the Brothers Grimm's tale into Spanish. Much of the tale offers little variation from what the Brothers Grimm wrote, emphasizing just how universal their tale has become now. However, there are still some differences, albeit small overall. When walking to her grandmother's house, Caperucita Roja wanders off the path multiple times, despite warnings from her mother, in search of flowers and butterflies. In the previous two tales, the wolf was the one to suggest that Red Riding Hood should gather flowers

¹ Although the website where this story is found does not credit authorship to *Caperucita roja*, I reached out to the website creators to confirm who the author of the story was. Mazlin, founder of the website, responded stating that "the stories are [her] own versions" and that she, with some help, translated the stories into Spanish (Mazlin).

for her grandmother or observe the pretty butterflies, but here the wolf plays no part in distracting the young girl as she does that all by herself. Furthermore, she returns to the path each time she leaves it when she hears something scary. Nonetheless, this does not stop her from talking to something in the bush; she never sees that she is talking to “el lobo feroz”. The wolf then races the girl to her grandmother’s house, where he again eats the grandmother and the girl until the huntsman comes to save both of them. Just like in the Brothers Grimm’s tale, they put rocks in the wolf’s stomach. However, when he wakes up, his stomach hurts so badly because of the rocks, and he cannot imagine ever having to eat meat again. As a result, he becomes a vegetarian. Another key difference in this tale is that, while fairy tales often have an unspoken but implied moral, Red Riding Hood here tells her mother explicitly that she will never talk to strangers again, which is essentially the moral of the story. After all, if she had not spoken to the stranger in the forest, none of the following events would have occurred.

Unlike the previous adaptations where Red Riding Hood is tricked into straying from the path to collect flowers for her grandmother, Caperucita Roja here gets distracted by herself and forgets her mother’s warnings to stay on the path and to hurry on her way. Immediately, she sees a strawberry patch and exclaims “*¡Qué hermosas fresas! . . . colocando su canasta en el piso*” (“what beautiful strawberries! . . . placing her basket on the floor”; Mazlin 2). But then she remembers what her mother told her and returns to the path before seeing a yellow butterfly that she wants to capture. Caperucita Roja comes across as less precarious than the protagonists in other versions simply because she does not fall for the wolf’s deception. Instead, she is a curious, strong willed girl who is not afraid to wander off the path to find what fascinates her. But then “un extraño sonido en el bosque hizo a Caperucita Roja saltar de miedo, y su corazón empezó a latir. [Ella piensa] ¡Debo encontrar el camino y correr lejos de aquí rápidamente!” (a strange sound in the forest made Caperucita Roja jump in fear, and her heart began to beat. [She thinks]

“I must find the path and run far from hear quickly”; Mazlin 2). Caperucita Roja is aware that there are bad things in the forest that could harm her and is rightfully scared of these things. This type of awareness of bad things is new to the protagonists of these tales and helps to promote the idea that there is something very real to be afraid of, maybe something more than a talking wolf. It is not the wolf so much that scares her as it is the scary sounds heard in the forest that could result in worse fates than meeting a wolf.

While the sounds scare her, remind her of her mother’s warnings, and showcase her awareness of potential dangers, Capeructia Roja still talks to the unidentified wolf hiding in the bushes. Despite knowing that there are dangerous things in the forest, she still seems to believe that it is a good idea to talk to strangers whose faces are hidden. This stark contradiction in her character, who shows that she knows bad things exist and yet talks to strangers, helps to emphasize and remind readers of her youth. After all, she still is a young girl who does not know better than to talk to strangers and gets herself into possibly deadly situations. Unlike the Brothers Grimm, Mazlin does not include Red Riding Hood’s redemption showing how she has matured as a result of her experiences. Instead, she gives readers a character who seems aware but then makes mistakes that seem obvious in the today’s time with the mentality of stranger danger. Even though this adaptation was released in 2015, it is as if Caperucita Roja does not know any better than not talking to strangers because she has never been told that this is a bad thing. She was told of the dangers of straying into the forest and warned not to do so in the beginning of the tale but never does her mother say anything about not talking to strangers.

A difference in this adaptation is that Red Riding Hood tells her mother that “nosotras debemos siempre permanecer en el camino y nunca deternos. Si hacemos eso, nosotras permaneceremos a salvo” (we must always stay on the path and never stop. If we do that, we will stay safe; Mazlin 7). Even though fairy tales often have an implicit moral included in the tale,

Mazlin goes out of her way to state this moral clearly so that everyone can understand what the moral is and to show that Caperucita Roja has learned her lesson. Unlike the Brothers Grimm, who give Red Riding Hood a second chance to show that she has learned her lesson, Mazlin proves this by having her tell her mother the same information that she was told in the beginning. Whereas before she evidently did not listen to her mother's advice, she now warns her mother of the same thing, likely to let her mother know that she will not make the mistake twice. But this moral is obvious, especially considering the many renderings of this tale with the same moral. Having Caperucita Roja explicitly state this moral is an interesting decision for this tale and may be a way to emphasize the importance of this moral further. Perhaps it is not enough to understand that leaving the main path can have dangerous consequences, but seeing it said explicitly can help readers to grasp all consequences that can result from leaving the path and stopping in the forest.

One of the parts of this adaptation that differs greatly from previous versions is the fact that the wolf survives and decides to become a vegetarian. After the Brothers Grimm introduced the character of the huntsman who kills the wolf, this idea began to appear in other adaptations of Red Riding Hood, but here Mazlin departs from this norm. While Red Riding Hood clearly learns her lesson in this story, the wolf also has a lesson to learn, only his is that eating people is bad. The rocks in his stomach remind him of the humans he ate that led to this ailment, and suddenly the predator no longer wants to be the predator. But more interesting is his decision to stay away from meat altogether, not just humans. In Spain, meat is one of the staple food groups consumed during most meals, accompanying a legume based diet (Campbell 4). To make a character who is supposed to consume meat a vegetarian seems somewhat ironic, especially in a country with high meat consumption rates. However, there is no clear reason as to why this change occurred in this adaptation. It is possible that the author could be showing acceptance of

vegetarianism in the country by making a famous character a vegetarian. Whatever the author's intentions were with this, not killing the wolf and having the wolf convert from a predator simply removes some of the more violent aspects of the story.

The rocks could have easily killed the wolf, just as they did in the Brothers Grimm version, but instead, although the circumstances are the same, the wolf lives. As a way to understand possibly why this occurs, one can consider the animal rights movements that are continuing to gain popularity throughout Spain and even throughout some other European countries (Hardouin-Fugier 7). Throughout the past century, the Spanish cultural tradition of bullfights has come under attack from those who consider it an abuse to the bulls and dangerous to the matadors as well. Animal rights activists have been working to pass more legislation against bullfighting, and it has been proclaimed that "to act wantonly to animals is to deny their moral status [and] wantonness violates God's right in Creation" (Hardouin-Fugier 182). In order to explain the reason for the wolf's survival potentially, here I propose a reading of Mazlin's *Caperucita roja* as an allegory for anti-bullfighting movements as like the bull, the wolf is a predatory animal. Yet he is spared as many wish for the bulls involved in the bullfighting arena.

While there is little evidence in the fairy tale itself to support this idea beyond the wolf's survival, it also can potentially explain one other small part of the story that was changed for an unknown reason. Unlike in the Brothers Grimm adaptation where Red Riding Hood suggests that they put rocks in the wolf's stomach, effectively killing the wolf, the huntsman assumes this responsibility in place of the young girl. While bullfighting has been an attraction for young children, both as spectators and participants, there have been concerns about children's involvement in bullfighting, especially "at a time when people are concerned about the rising violence of which young people can be either the perpetrators, witnesses or victims" and there has been an increase in calls to ban minors from bullfights, even with parental supervision

(Hardouin-Fugier 179). Removing her from something that could kill the wolf, Maazlin further establishes the girl's innocence, and her youth is reemphasized as the huntsman does the task that may kill the wolf, letting the girl watch. While she is the victim of violence and a witness to possibly more violence, she plays no role in perpetrating the crime, instead a victim of the wolf and her own naivety. In a world where even violent videogames and television shows are thought to lead to an increase in violence amongst youth, Caperucita Roja is removed from the position of the perpetrator by the masculine adult figure in the story, and if one compares this to the situation in Spain with the anti-bullfighting movements and children she is spared from having to kill the metaphoric bull. This idea may reemphasize that a child's place is away from violence.

At the same time, the huntsman's role in the story may further emphasize gender inequality issues that are occurring in Spain and throughout the world. While there is no way to know for certain what Mazlin's intentions were when writing her adaptation, if she had any other than to translate a well-known tale into Spanish, it is possible that she is showing the dominant role of men in society as the savior figure. This idea was also possibly introduced in the Brothers Grimm adaptation when they added the huntsman character, but two hundred years after the Brothers Grimm included this character to save Red Riding Hood the young girl still needs a male figure to save her. Unlike Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, Mazlin is a female author retelling this tale in a similar manner to her predecessors with the girl needing help that, according to the story, only a man can give, not changing many of the elements. On one hand, Mazlin could be continuing the tradition that everyone knows while adding her own twists to make the story her own, but by promoting the stasis in the fairy tale she is showing that elements of this story are either so ingrained that they cannot be changed or that there is a reason she does not change these elements.

If one operates under the assumption that Mazlin kept certain elements of the Red Riding Hood tradition the same as her predecessors, such as having Caperucita Roja eaten by the wolf and then saved by the huntsman, perhaps she is reinforcing the ideas of sexual assault that Perrault included in his early version in that through the girl's naivety she falls for the wolf's tricks and ends up in his stomach. The dangers of talking to strangers is emphasized to a greater degree in this tale, as already described, when Caperucita Roja talks to a stranger hidden in the forest, and her punishment is the same as the young girls that came before in other adaptations. The allegorical nature of the tale becomes even more relevant as there is greater prominence on this issue nowadays, and it is possible that Mazlin is pointing out this relevance in her tale. Even as time passes, sexual assault is still occurring, and young girls in particular still need to be warned about the dangers that could await them if they are not careful and smart with the choices that they make. Speaking to strangers in the forest is a sure way to end up in the belly of the beast.

Something else to consider when looking at this adaptation is the intended audience of this tale, which is actually directed toward Spanish second language learners. Written to help people improve their reading comprehension by using familiar tales, *Caperucita roja* likely sticks to a more familiar version of the story in order to help learners. While adding some of her own twists, Mazlin keeps the basic structure of the story similar to that of the Brothers Grimm, which readers are most likely to be familiar with already. Although there could be a myriad of reasons as to why Mazlin did not make many changes to the story, as previously explored, this is another possibility that highlights just how important having a basic understanding of the supposed source tale is. Without the knowledge of the tale in one's native language, it would be more difficult to read and understand unfamiliar parts in the new language, as one would be unable to build off of prior experience with the story. In comparison to Perrault, for example,

who wrote his tales for the aristocracy to learn from and enjoy, Mazlin is writing to help transmit known stories in order to promote learning, and this could easily impact the variations or lack thereof that appear in her work.

3.2 Nalo Hopkinson and “Riding the Red”

Aletta Mazlin’s current work on fairy tales continued with the trends endorsed by Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, but not all modern adaptations uphold similar ideas, instead branching out to explore the story in a different light. Unlike Mazlin’s work, another recent adaptation of Red Riding Hood from Nalo Hopkinson in 2001 presents new ideas on the same themes, helping to show how not all modern authors stick with the already analyzed ideas. Hopkinson is the daughter of a Caribbean writer who considers herself to be a Jamaican-born Canadian writer (Hopkinson *Whispers from the Cotton Tree* XII). In this story, the grandmother tells the story instead of Red Riding Hood and reflects on what happened to her, her daughter, and soon to her granddaughter. Trying to warn her granddaughter, who although never named is assumed to be Red Riding Hood, the grandmother can never impart just how dangerous it can be when you are riding the red and the wolf smells it because the girl does not listen and her mother always interrupts. This idea of riding the red is reiterated throughout the text and has symbolic interpretations, which will be discussed in further detail below. But the grandmother remembers what it was like when she was riding the red and the wolf caught her and her grandmother. Then the woodman saved them both, and everything was fine again. The grandmother eventually married someone who reminded her of that woodman, had a daughter, and did not warn her daughter of these dangers, hoping to protect her instead. Then the day came when the wolf came for her daughter, but once again all was well and her daughter and mother were saved. Now it is time for her granddaughter to undergo the same thing, and she has not been properly warned of

the dangers. The story ends with the grandmother accepting her fate, and there is a knock on the door, presumably the wolf pretending to be Red Riding Hood.

While the idea of the story of Red Riding Hood is implied here, this tale shows a deviation from the familiar story, most obviously due to the change in point of view. Instead of giving readers the opportunity to sympathize with the naïve girl who does not know any better than to talk to the strange wolf she meets, Hopkinson shows how the grandmother has changed and grown up since experiencing the encounter that readers are familiar with. With lines like “first slip past the old mother” and “I cried then, down in the dark with my grandma, till the woodman came to save us”, it becomes evident that the grandmother met the wolf and was eaten by him along with her own grandmother (Hopkinson Skin Folk). But the story does not end there, and it is revealed that the other women in this family meet the same fate as the grandmother when they begin riding the red. Taking a familiar tale and reinterpreting it, Hopkinson shows the most variation in her writing in comparison to the other authors analyzed in this essay.

Clearly, there is something important about this idea of riding the red, since the story is titled after this and this idea is repeated throughout the short tale. While it is never explicitly stated, it is likely that riding the red is a euphemism for menstruation. After all, the grandmother tries to explain to her granddaughter that “pretty soon now, you’re going to be riding the red, and if you don’t look smart, next stop is wolfie’s house, and wolfie, doesn’t he just love the smell of that blood, oh yes” (Hopkinson Skin Folk). When the grandmother was riding the red, she recalls how young she felt and how “drunk on the smell of [her] own blood flowing” (Hopkinson Skin Folk). Here, the relationship between youth and blood is emphasized, and since menstruation begins when youth are on the point of adulthood it reinforces the euphemism. Instead of wearing a red hood that captures the wolf’s attention, the blood is enough and acts in place of the hood.

Curiously, the hood has been thought to be more symbolic than simply a clothing choice. In his analysis of Red Riding Hood, based on the earlier literary traditions, Erich Fromm creates the theory that the red hood is a symbolic of Red Riding Hood's menstruation. He states that "the little cap of red velvet is a symbol of menstruation [and] the little girl of whose adventures we hear has become a mature woman and is now confronted with the problem of sex" (240). Even though there is no concrete red hood in Hopkinson's tale, the concept of riding the red reiterates the symbolism of the red hood based on Fromm's theories.

Unlike the Brothers Grimm and Mazlin, Hopkinson includes sexual implications in her work, which help tie in the idea that the wolf's prey has always just begun menstruating and does not know any better. The grandmother, in describing what it was like to be riding the red, points out that it made her "feel all shivery and nice to see wolfie's nostrils flare as he scented it [and she] could make wolfie slaver. . . and beg to come close, just to feel the heat from [her]" (Hopkinson Skin Folk). Enjoying the hold that she has on the wolf, the grandmother says that what ensued was a game, a dance that she initiated and led. By calling what happened a dance, Hopkinson makes what follows seem lighthearted and wanted by the grandmother. After the wolf makes it past the old mother, the grandmother depicts the wolf's dance as "all hot breath and leaping flank, piercing eyes to see with and strong hands to hold. And the teeth, ah yes. That biting and the tearing and the slipping down into the hot and wet. That measure we dance together, wolfie and [her]" (Hopkinson Skin Folk). While there is no mention of her undressing, getting into bed with the wolf, or even exchanging Perrault's dialogue, there is something sensual in this description of a dance, with his flank moving and his breath hot. Never before has the movement of the wolf's body been described as leaping, and this seems to indicate that the grandmother knows what she is getting into with the wolf. Gina Wisker points out that "Hopkinson's granny is no victim but a wise woman with a memory of her own sexual appetites.

She muses over the memory of her youth sexual encounters with “Wolfie” (71, 72). Yet, this reinforces the idea of the girls growing up and embracing their adulthood, as with their innocence gone it is hard to consider them children anymore.

This story focuses on the women and the matrilineal family line instead of men. The woodman is mentioned but is not an active character in the story. Nonetheless, despite his passivity in this story, he still plays an important role in the story, still saving the girls from the wolf. More importantly, however, is that the grandmother refers to her husband as “a nice man, reminded [her] a bit of that woodman, he did” (Hopkinson Skin Folk). While she does not marry the woodman who saved her, she finds somebody who is similar to him, embodies the same traits as him, and could have been the woodman. Like in the Brothers Grimm, who first introduced the huntsman character as Red Riding Hood’s savior, this woodman represents the good in men and is someone who can protect the women who are incapable of staying safe themselves. Marrying someone who reminds her of the woodman shows that the grandmother implies that he represented the same type of safety that the woodman offered her in the first place and that he would always be able to save her from the wolf.

Toward the end of the story, the grandmother points out that even though the woodman saved her and her daughter, and all the other girls who undergo this experience, “it’s wolfie gives us birth, oh yes” (Hopkinson Skin Folk). As previously discussed, the idea of Red Riding Hood and the grandmother coming out of the wolf’s stomach mimics child birthing processes, but Hopkinson’s line here reiterates the idea of birthing. Bettelheim describes this scene, with regard to *Little Red Cap*, as Red Riding Hood dying and that “when the story says the little girl sprang out of the wolf’s belly, she came to life a different person”, creating this idea of the birth of a new, self-aware, and less innocent character (179). However, this idea has never been stated explicitly before, simply implied and described in the works of researchers like Bettelheim. Here,

Hopkinson describes the encounter with the wolf as creating a new character, one who is born as a result of this encounter and through the woodman cutting open the wolf, like a woman undergoing a caesarian section. This simply shows the interconnectedness between all these stories despite the many changes in the story and the separation of over 100 years between adaptations.

Even though this story deals with a cyclical nature where different characters represent the Red Riding Hood figure, these characters are important beyond their encounters with the wolf when they are riding the red unlike in previous adaptations. Obviously, this story is the grandmother's instead of the youthful Red Riding Hood normally seen, but even Red Riding Hood's mother is present, always watching out for her daughter, which is unusual in the early literary tradition. Normally, the grandmother loves Red Riding Hood more than the seemingly absent mother figure, but here the mother is included, trying to prevent the grandmother from telling her daughter about riding the red. In trying to understand why the mother is so absent in the literary tradition, Yvonne Verdier refers to the idea of motherhood, as initiated when a girl begins puberty, and states that "the day of her puberty a girl already partially eliminates her mother, still more the day she knows the sexual act, and definitely when she procreates. The mother is replaced to the degree that her daughter's genetic functions are affirmed" (110). Following this idea, the mother cannot play a role in the earlier traditions because she is being replaced. But here not only is the mother important but also the grandmother, which emphasizes the matrilineal heritage in the family and the stages in a woman's life: puberty, motherhood, and menopause – Red Riding Hood, her mother, and the grandmother (Verdier 110). Each woman represents a part of a woman's life in terms of reproduction, and Red Riding Hood representing puberty helps to showcase some of the ideas introduced above, such as the sexual assault element in Perrault's adaptation. It also fits with the idea of riding the red being a euphemism for

menstruation, the most important part of puberty for girls. Furthermore, the importance of the mother and the grandmother in this story is not surprising, considering that Hopkinson writes in the style of other Caribbean authors in order to maintain her roots (Hopkinson *Whispers from the Cotton Tree* XIII). Whereas fairy tales typically feature the absent or surrogate mother, writings in the speculative Gothic horror genre from Caribbean authors tend to explore “the duties of care that mothers and grandmother have for the next generation, which needs to recuperate the past and revision the future” (Wisker 72).

Understanding this relation in any of the stories in the Red Riding Hood tradition shows the importance of absences in the story, but in the case of “Riding the Red” Verdier’s ideas still apply. She sums up the role of all three women as follows: “so what the tale tells us is the necessity of the female biological transformation by which the young eliminate the old in their own lifetime. Mothers will be replaced by their daughters and the circle will be closed with the arrival of their children’s children. Moral: grandmothers will be eaten” (110). Not only does this explain the importance of all three women in the story but it also explains the circular element to the tale where the cycle is bound to repeat with each girl in the family who begins to ride the red. The story ends abruptly with the grandmother preparing for the wolf to eat her, thus renewing the cycle. There is no end in sight for these women, especially when it seems that the women are using their embroidery skills to put the wolf back together again. The grandmother states that “the trick is, you must always have a needle by you, and a bit of thread. Those damned embroidery lessons come in handy, they do. What’s torn can be sewn up again, it can, and then we’re off on the dance once more” (Hopkinson *Skin Folk*). The dance is a never-ending cyclical part of their lives, like the cycle of daughters replacing their mothers and continuing the familial line.

Although this tale deviates from the familiar story, “Riding the Red” is still recognizable to readers as a take on the Red Riding Hood tradition. However, this is not Hopkinson’s only work that looks at Red Riding Hood in the light of a different culture. In an interview cited in Farah Mendelsohn’s work, she states that “Riding the Red” is a story “written in a colloquial rich Cheshire English, the language of fairy tales” that introduces Red Riding Hood into the Caribbean tale-telling culture (103). But Hopkinson has also rewritten her own story as “Red Rider” as a monologue in Patwa, the Jamaican creole that is typically considered the native language in Jamaica (Mendelsohn 104). Already the story was something of “a hybrid, a European tale worked into Caribbean”, but this revisioning of her own story reveals the impact the audience can have on a tale, an idea supported by the fact that different authors of the same tale change elements to best fit the needs of their target audience (105). Rewriting her story so that another group of people would be able to read and understand her story, Hopkinson reveals how important the themes she works with are, reaching a larger population with this rewrite. Anybody who can read this text should be able to understand Hopkinson’s themes, promoting awareness of a burgeoning sexuality in young women. Both of these stories become “part of a large global setting and simultaneously [belong] to a specific local one” (Mountout 71).

4. Pedagogical Implications

Like any good fairy tale, Red Riding Hood has a story to be learned, a moral that is either implied or sometimes spoken explicitly, like in Mazlin’s *Caperucita roja*. After all, this tale, especially in its earliest literary form, is an allegory for sexual assault, created by Perrault and furthered cemented by authors that came afterward, and as Bettelheim stated it was easier to scare children into good behavior than to reassure them that it was fiction. Based on the consequences that Red Riding Hood faces when she talks to strangers, it is clear that the moral of

the tale is simply do not talk to strangers. The consequences that follow are a reminder that bad things can harm children unless one learns from Red Riding Hood's mistakes.

But beyond a single moral, there are many lessons to be learned in Red Riding Hood that go hand in hand with the aforementioned moral that help to demonstrate the importance of using fairy tales to educate children as well as the adults reading the story to children. First is the idea of obeying parents' orders. Red Riding Hood is warned to stay on the path and is sometimes told not to talk to anyone, depending on the adaptation being used. But as the story continues, Red Riding immediately abandons these directions and ends up in trouble because of it. Had she simply listened to her mother, none of the story would have occurred. This directly correlates with the idea of not talking to strangers as the overall moral since disobeying her parents and talking to strangers results in the same punishment. Furthermore, seeing the fictional connection between breaking parents' directions and being eaten by a wolf may be able to scare children into following their parents' orders.

Also related to these two lessons is the one that warns children not to give personal information to strangers, such as where one is heading. Red Riding Hood does not seem to know any better when she tells the wolf that she is going to her grandmother's house, which is located on the other side of the forest, and that her grandmother lives alone but never opens the door for strangers. Giving the wolf the opportunity and means to an easy meal, Red Riding Hood does not even consider what may happen now that the wolf has that information, assuming that all is still well. It has always been important to know this, as there is no way of knowing who is like the wolf and will do bad things with that information, but especially today this is important. With the prevalence of social media nowadays, one must be careful of what they share with the world. Red Riding Hood's mistake has dire ramifications for not only her but her grandmother, and

children have the opportunity to see how telling personal information to other people can affect them negatively even before they can do so online.

Continuing with the idea that fear can lead to learning, then even the setting of part of the story can teach children something. The forest through which Red Riding Hood must travel to visit her grandmother's house is a place of darkness and a place where dangerous creatures dwell and where dangerous things can happen to those who walk through it. It is a place to be warned of and to be cautious when traversing, especially when unaccompanied. Other stories have incorporated the forest as a setting where harm comes to those who enter unaware of the dangers that may be awaiting them, such as in *Hansel and Gretel*. For children, it may seem as a place of intrigue, but it is more often than not where danger finds the children. After all, it is the home of all sorts of predators, animal and even human, both in the fictional and real worlds. The lesson to be learned simply by observing the setting is that the forest is not a safe place for children by themselves. Children should not wander through the forest without supervision, lest something bad finds them, which leads us to the next lesson that can be learned simply by reading *Red Riding Hood*.

While this story now is geared more toward children, whereas when Perrault was writing he wrote for the aristocracy, there is still a lesson for the adults reading it. Telling her daughter what to do, *Red Riding Hood's* mother believes that she will be safe as she travels through the forest, undoubtedly following her advice. Her mother has no way of knowing if her daughter will actually do as she says, which as readers find out she does not. She goes off the path, gets distracted, and talks to strangers, and because of these mistakes she ends up dying in Perrault's story and almost dying in the other versions simply because the mother assumed that her daughter would be safe in the dangerous forest all by herself. Seeing what can happen to a young child on their own in a potentially dangerous situation serves as a reminder to parents that no

matter how safe something may seem does not guarantee that it actually is safe. There is danger everywhere, and young children are especially susceptible to this danger as they tend not to know better. While Red Riding Hood's youth is emphasized in each version, often with her being called a young girl, it especially now seems peculiar that her mother would trust her to make it to her grandmother's house without anyone watching over her. On one hand, it seems to show neglect on the mother's part, although there is not enough evidence to know if that is true or not since the mother figure is barely seen in the story. Mazlin's adaptation seems to beg that the mother does care, with her reappearing at the end and profusely thanking the huntsman for saving Red Riding Hood and the grandmother before walking Red Riding Hood home, not letting the girl out of her sight again. Whether or not there is an element of parental neglect in this story, adults reading this are still reminded of the dangers of sending young children out into the world without supervision.

Many of these lessons build on the idea of fear advocating for a positive change in a child's behavior by showing the dangers of not following directions. Yet one lesson builds on the idea that good can conquer, although not all authors in the Red Riding Hood tradition advocate this lesson. This is the idea that the greedy can be punished. The wolf was greedy; he could have just eaten the grandmother and left without waiting for Red Riding Hood. But instead he waited for the young girl, a second easy meal, and ate her, thus becoming sleepy and careless. Sleeping when the huntsman showed up, the wolf did not stand a chance against the huntsman and received his comeuppance, being killed in many versions and in Mazlin's being forced to change his way of life to accommodate the uncomfortable rocks in his stomach and showing that he learned his lesson. Nonetheless, it is this negative aspect of the wolf's character that leads to his downfall, and while on one hand this story advocates against greed it more importantly shows that the greedy will not always succeed. Of course, Perrault does not advocate this view, as the

wolf in his story succeeds, but many authors that follow him show that it was the wolf's greed that led to his demise. It is this reminder that bad people do not always win that can give children hope and remind them of the good things in life.

Unsurprisingly, there are many lessons to be read and understood in different retellings of Red Riding Hood, like many other fairy tales, and it helps to frame this story as a cautionary for youth and even for adults. Yet the multitude of simple lessons to be learned does not alleviate many of the ideas introduced and described for each adaptation above, such as the ideas of sexual encounters, both wanted and unwanted. Due to these adult themes appearing in works intended for children, many consider these stories unacceptable when it comes to teaching. In Frances Goforth and Carolyn Spillman's guide on using folktales in the classroom to guide learning, C.S. Lewis is quoted on the reasons for these concerns:

First, adults are concerned that children who experience tales will not be able to understand the differences between real and fantasy worlds. Second, some well-meaning adults believe that, by reading tales, children are escaping the real world. Third, adults are concerned that the tales will cause children to have haunting, disabling, pathological fears. (7)

There will always be reasons not to teach certain stories, tales like Red Riding Hood, because of the questionable themes that parents may not want their children to be aware of. However, framed in the right light, one does not have to go into these themes with the children. It is possible to talk about the moral of the tale without going into the details as to why not talking to strangers can be dangerous beyond the obvious. Fairy tales can be used to increase understanding of the world around us, whether one choose to explain the darker themes or not.

5. Conclusion

Throughout its transmission history, the tale of Red Riding Hood has clearly undergone many changes, and yet at the same time it has not varied too greatly over the course of over three hundred years. Since the beginning of the literary tradition, one element that has consistently remained the same in these adaptations is the fact that Red Riding Hood always becomes the wolf's prey and ends up in his stomach. Her naivety and innocence lead to her demise, and while what follows differs from adaptation to adaptation the allegorical nature of this scene remains the same. Acting as an allegory for sexual encounters and a loss of innocence, this scene serves as a reminder for girls and women in particular. It also leads to the idea that Red Riding Hood always has to be eaten by the wolf in order to help show these dangers. Never the hero of her own story, Red Riding Hood instead emphasizes sexuality, both a women's sexual awakening and a man's predatory sexuality. While the modern adaptations differ in terms of how they address these issues, with Hopkinson addressing it directly and Mazlin not really adding much to the argument but reinforcing earlier ideas, all of the adaptations have their commonalities when the wolf eats Red Riding Hood, showing the importance of this scene

In regard to pedagogical implications of using this story with the children, there are many ways to teach Red Riding Hood that do not go into details about the sexual nature of the story simply because there are many small lessons to be learned that are still highly applicable in society today. After analyzing all of these tales individually and as a whole, the idea of how to approach this tale with children still resonates with educators hoping to use this tale in their classroom. One should consider the age group before delving into some of the deeper content, but using this tale can help to lead into discussions about issues that plague society, even in a discreet manner. Issues of gender differences can be understood even by younger children and can lead into discussion about why Red Riding Hood needs a man to save her in some versions

of the story, without going into the details of sexual assault. With older children, however, it is possible to start looking at these issues as a way of making connections with current issues in society and showing the relevance of tales both from centuries ago and modern day. Regardless of how one chooses to address the topics introduced in the story of Red Riding Hood, however, it is helpful to know how to make connections between the literature and society and to be aware that there will always be something pertinent to children in this tale.

But this text deals with more than just pedagogical issues and difficulties with using this tale with children, as explained above. Understanding how all of these stories individually and as a whole affect the Red Riding Hood tradition help readers to see all of the connections between each story and to see how the tale has changed, especially with regards to the treatment of gender and sexuality. Each tale builds upon the previous ones and incorporates new ideas based on the author, the time period, and the culture that help readers to understand the universality of this tale. Coming of age for a young girl seemingly has not changed much since Perrault first recorded Red Riding Hood in print, despite the variations in each adaptation, and only looking at the tradition as a conglomerate does it become possible to see this.

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